ENGLISH VERSION

LEARNING TO READ ON TIME, TRANSFORMING DEVELOPMENT

What would Latin America and the Caribbean gain if 9 in 10 children could read by age 10?

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ABOUT THIS VERSION

English translation of the original Spanish study, *Alfabetizar a tiempo, transformar el desarrollo. ¿Qué ganaría América Latina y el Caribe si 9 de cada 10 niños pudieran leer a los 10 años?* (Instituto de Evidencia Educativa, October 2026).

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SYNTHESIS

Executive summary

Learning to read in the early years of schooling is an essential foundation for further learning and for expanding opportunities throughout life. When these skills are not acquired on time, the difficulties can persist throughout a child's educational trajectory and constrain future opportunities. Ensuring foundational learning is therefore not only an educational objective: it is also a priority for economic and social development.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) faces a considerable challenge. According to the baseline data used by the What Works Hub for Global Education (WWHGE), 46.7% of 10-year-olds reach minimum reading proficiency across the 21 countries of the region included in its analysis. This represents a gap of 43.3 percentage points relative to a scenario in which 9 in 10 children can read and understand simple texts at that age.

What would change if the region reached that scenario? Drawing on the WWHGE estimates (Kaffenberger et al., 2026), this study by the Instituto de Evidencia Educativa (IEE) analyses the potential benefits of achieving and sustaining minimum reading proficiency among 90% of 10-year-olds. The report presents the estimated regional results for 2031–2050 and offers a comparative analysis of the 21 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, considering their educational, labour-market, economic and social implications.

The results point to potential benefits of considerable magnitude:

- **Education and employment:** 10.1 million additional children would reach the last grade of primary school, 11.6 million additional children would reach any form of secondary school, and approximately 4.4 million additional young people would be in persistent employment.
- **Economy and public finances:** the region would accumulate USD 31.6 trillion in additional economic output and USD 4.36 trillion in additional tax revenue between 2031 and 2050. In 2050, regional GDP per capita would be 46% higher than in the model's business-as-usual scenario.
- **Social well-being:** around 150,000 deaths of children under five and 367,000 child marriages would be averted, according to the mechanisms and assumptions used in the simulation.

The analysis also shows that these potential benefits are not evenly distributed. Countries differ markedly in their initial learning levels, their economic structures and their demographic and social conditions. Absolute economic results alone therefore do not capture the magnitude of the educational and social opportunities that could be expanded in each context.

These estimates correspond to a hypothetical scenario; they are neither forecasts nor the demonstrated effects of a specific educational intervention. Nor does the model estimate the costs or the policies required to reach the 90% target. It does, however, make it possible to gauge the potential consequences of a broad-based improvement in foundational learning.

The results reinforce the case for placing early literacy among the strategic priorities of Latin America and the Caribbean, through effective and sustained policies adapted to the needs of each education system. Ensuring that children learn to read on time not only broadens their educational opportunities: it can also help to broaden the development opportunities of society as a whole.

1. Learning to read on time: a foundation for development

Learning to read in the early years of schooling is an essential foundation for further learning, for developing increasingly complex capabilities and for expanding opportunities throughout life. When children reach the age of 10 unable to read and understand simple texts, they face greater difficulties in advancing their learning and progressing through school.

This challenge highlights a distinction that is central to education policy: attending school does not guarantee learning. Pritchett (2013) argues that the expansion of schooling does not automatically translate into the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Ensuring access to and retention in school is indispensable, but students must also acquire the expected learning.

The importance of this learning extends beyond the education system. Hanushek and Woessmann (2015) show that the cognitive skills of the population, proxied by results in international assessments, are more closely associated with long-run economic growth than years of schooling considered in isolation. This evidence underlines the importance of orienting education policy not only towards schooling but also towards the learning that is actually acquired.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, where a substantial proportion of children do not reach minimum levels of reading proficiency, this challenge takes on a regional dimension. Learning difficulties can not only compromise individual school trajectories but also limit the development of capabilities and the economic and social opportunities of new generations.

To gauge the possible consequences of improving this learning, Kaffenberger et al. (2026), in a study by the What Works Hub for Global Education (WWHGE), model a scenario of universal foundational learning, defined as a situation in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10. The authors use 90% as a practical proxy for universality, recognising that even in high-capacity education systems some children may not reach that threshold.

The starting point is built from the learning poverty indicator of the World Bank and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, which combines information on the reading proficiency of children in school with information on those who are out of school. WWHGE uses the complement of this indicator to estimate the proportion of children who reach minimum reading proficiency. The baseline data come from the 2022 edition of that database. They correspond to measurements taken in different years and, for some countries, include imputed values (Kaffenberger et al., 2026)[1].

Although the indicator focuses on reading, WWHGE uses it as a proxy for foundational learning in a broader sense[2], given that reading and mathematics results are closely related in international assessments.

In the 21 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean included in the study, 46.7% of 10-year-olds reach minimum reading proficiency, according to the data used by WWHGE. This represents a gap of 43.3 percentage points relative to the 90% scenario, with substantial differences across countries.

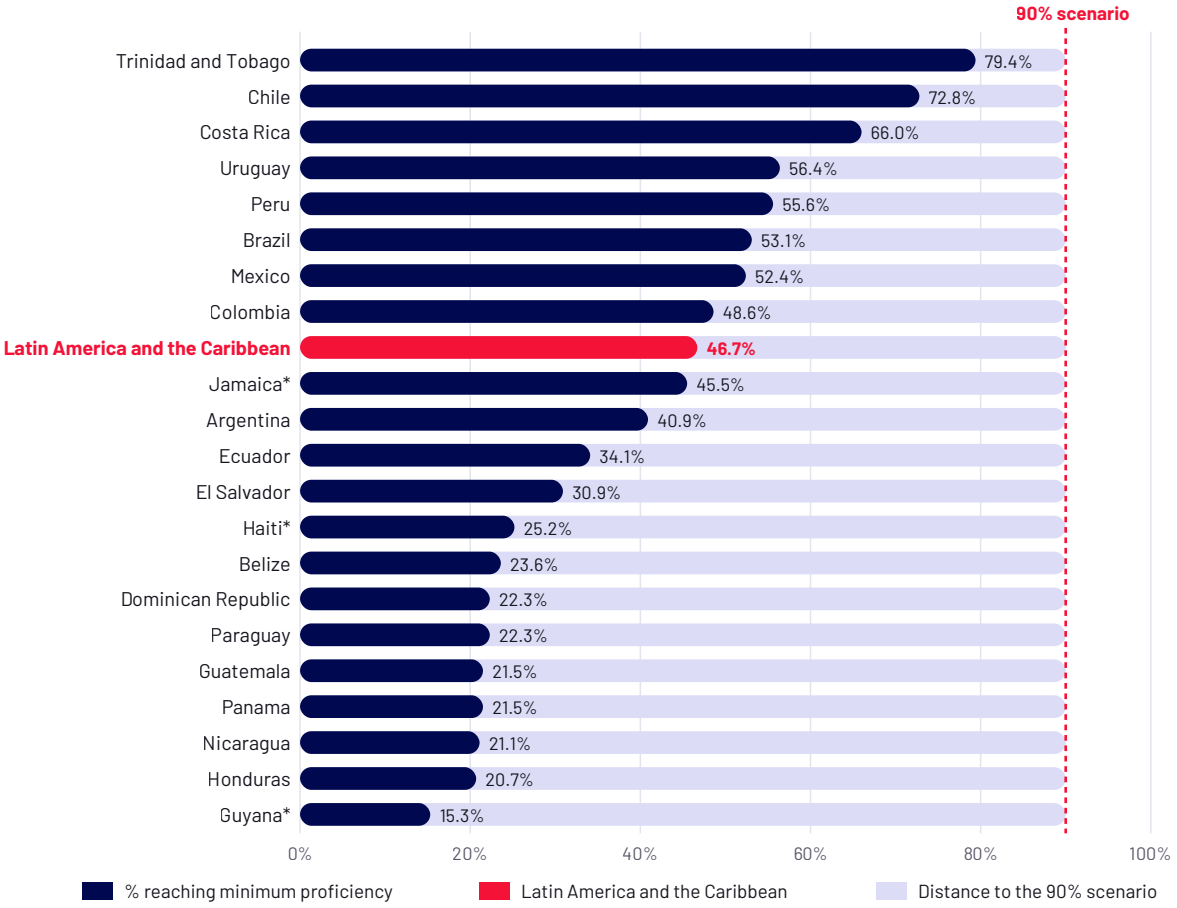
[1] WWHGE uses the Learning Poverty Global Database of the World Bank and the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2022). For countries without observed learning poverty data, it imputes values from the relationship between learning poverty and Harmonized Learning Outcomes. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the values for Guyana, Haiti and Jamaica are imputed.

[2] WWHGE finds a statistically significant association between reading and mathematics results in international assessments (adjusted $R^2 = 0.88$). See Kaffenberger et al. (2026), Annex B.1.

FIGURE 1

The starting point towards universal foundational learning varies widely across LAC countries

Percentage of 10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency and the universal foundational learning scenario (90%)



Note: the 90% corresponds to the universal foundational learning scenario defined by WWHGE. *Learning poverty values imputed by WWHGE (Guyana, Haiti and Jamaica).

Source: prepared by the Instituto de Evidencia Educativa based on WWHGE (2026), Table A1; regional value from Table A3.

It is important to distinguish the scenario analysed here from specific early literacy policies. The latter seek to develop reading and writing skills in the early years of schooling, whereas WWHGE estimates the potential benefits of a scenario in which 90% of children reach and sustain minimum reading proficiency by age 10, used as a proxy for broader foundational learning. The results therefore do not represent the effects of any particular literacy programme, nor do they allow the resources or interventions needed to reach that scenario to be estimated.

On the basis of this scenario, it is possible to gauge the potential benefits associated with better learning, both for educational and labour-market trajectories and for economic and social development.

2. More learning, more educational and labour-market opportunities

The consequences of acquiring foundational learning in the early years can extend throughout educational and working lives. Children who develop these skills are better placed to advance in their learning, remain in school and access further educational opportunities.

For Latin America and the Caribbean, WWHGE estimates that achieving universal foundational learning would mean that, between 2031 and 2050, 10.1 million additional children would reach the last grade of primary school and 11.6 million additional children would reach any form of secondary school (Kaffenberger et al., 2026).

These estimates draw on evidence linking better learning outcomes to a lower probability of dropping out of school. The model assumes a 40% reduction in the probability of dropping out during primary school for each additional standard deviation in learning outcomes, and a 25% reduction in the probability of dropping out at the transition from primary to secondary school.

The scope of these indicators should be made clear. The first estimates the additional number of children who would reach the last grade of primary school, while the second refers to reaching any form of secondary school. Neither is directly equivalent to the number of students who would complete those levels of education.

The potential benefits also extend to the labour market. WWHGE estimates that, under the same scenario, approximately 4.4 million additional young people would be in persistent employment in Latin America and the Caribbean over 2031–2050[3].

BOX 1

If 9 in 10 children learned to read by age 10...

Cumulative modelled results for Latin America and the Caribbean, 2031–2050.

10.1 million
additional children **would reach the last grade of primary school.**

11.6 million
additional children **would reach any form of secondary school.**

4.4 million
additional young people **would be in persistent employment.**

Note: cumulative modelled results for Latin America and the Caribbean between 2031 and 2050 under the universal foundational learning scenario (90% of children reading with minimum proficiency by age 10); these are not observed effects.

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A3.

These estimates show that improvements in foundational learning could translate into greater opportunities for school progression and labour-market integration. Their relevance lies not only in increasing the number of students who progress through the education system, but also in broadening the possibilities for new generations to develop their capabilities and participate in economic life.

[3] To estimate this outcome, WWHGE uses a central parameter of a 4.4 percentage-point reduction in youth unemployment per additional standard deviation in learning outcomes. The indicator is calculated for the youth labour force aged 15–24 and sums the annual reductions in the number of unemployed young people over 2031–2050; it is not equivalent to the permanent creation of 4.4 million jobs (Kaffenberger et al., 2026).

3. The economic and fiscal dividend of learning

The potential benefits of improving foundational learning are not limited to individual trajectories. When these improvements reach a large share of the population, they can also have implications for economic growth and public finances.

According to WWHGE estimates, achieving a scenario in which 90% of children read with minimum proficiency by age 10 would be associated with USD 31.6 trillion in cumulative additional economic output in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2031 and 2050. By the end of that period, regional GDP per capita would be 46% higher than in the business-as-usual scenario used by the authors[4] (Kaffenberger et al., 2026).

To estimate these benefits, WWHGE draws on international evidence on the association between Harmonized Learning Outcomes (HLO) and long-run economic growth (Angrist et al., 2021)[5]. On the basis of this relationship, the model translates improvements in reading proficiency into changes in HLO and incorporates them into each country's economic projections. This is a simulation exercise based on empirical associations and modelling assumptions, not a causal estimate of the effects of a specific education policy.

The economic benefits are phased in gradually: between 2025 and 2030 (lag period) no additional growth is attributed to the universal foundational learning scenario; between 2031 and 2040 (ramp-up) the modelled effect increases progressively; and between 2041 and 2050 (plateau) it applies in full. In addition, WWHGE caps real annual GDP per capita growth at 7% to avoid extreme trajectories.

Additional economic output is the sum of the annual differences between the universal foundational learning scenario and the business-as-usual scenario. The USD 31.6 trillion is therefore not an increase in GDP in a single year, but a cumulative result over the period analysed. Amounts are expressed in constant 2023 US dollars[6].

Higher economic activity would also have fiscal implications. WWHGE estimates that, under the same scenario, Latin America and the Caribbean could record USD 4.36 trillion in cumulative additional tax revenue between 2031 and 2050. To obtain this result, the model applies the tax-to-GDP ratios used for each country to the differences in output between the two scenarios, without assuming any additional changes in tax policy (Kaffenberger et al., 2026).

BOX 2

The economic dividend of learning

If 9 in 10 children learned to read by age 10, Latin America and the Caribbean could achieve:

USD 31.6 trillion
in additional economic output
Cumulative between 2031 and 2050.

+46%
in GDP per capita in 2050
Relative to the business-as-usual scenario modelled by WWHGE.

USD 4.36 trillion
in additional tax revenue
Cumulative between 2031 and 2050. Assumes no changes in tax policy.

Note: modelled results for Latin America and the Caribbean under the universal foundational learning scenario (90% of children reading with minimum proficiency by age 10).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A3.

[4] Value published by WWHGE (2026), Table A3. The global figure (+27%) is population-weighted, but WWHGE does not document the aggregation method used for the regional values. It should not be interpreted as a simple average of the national changes.
[5] WWHGE uses a parameter whereby a 1% increase in HLO is associated with a 7.2% increase in GDP per capita growth. The relationship is correlational and should not be interpreted as a direct causal effect (Kaffenberger et al., 2026).
[6] Economic and fiscal amounts are cumulative differences between the modelled scenarios for 2031–2050, summed without applying a discount rate. Throughout this report, "trillion" denotes 10^{12} (a million million) and "billion" 10^{9} (a thousand million).

The results make it possible to distinguish three dimensions of the potential economic benefit: the cumulative additional output over the period, the difference in GDP per capita at its end, and the cumulative additional tax revenue associated with the expansion of economic activity. Together, these dimensions show that sustained improvements in learning could have implications both for the economic opportunities of the population and for countries' fiscal capacity.

4. Beyond GDP: the social benefits of learning

The value of foundational learning is not exhausted by its possible effects on employment or economic growth. Being able to read also expands people's capabilities to access information, participate in society and make decisions about their own lives.

From the perspective of Sen's (1999) capability approach, development can be understood as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy. In this sense, literacy is valuable both for the opportunities it can open up and for the capabilities it allows people to develop in their own right.

Research by Kaffenberger and Pritchett (2021) provides evidence on the importance of effective learning for other social outcomes. The authors analyse the relationship between women's literacy and schooling and a range of outcomes related to health, fertility and empowerment, highlighting that the skills actually acquired matter beyond years of formal education.

WWHGE incorporates two additional dimensions of social well-being into its simulation exercise: under-five mortality and child marriage. Both outcomes are estimated through specific mechanisms, supported by empirical evidence and model assumptions (Kaffenberger et al., 2026).

To estimate the child deaths potentially averted, WWHGE uses evidence on the relationship between maternal literacy and under-five mortality. The model projects how improvements in childhood learning could translate, in the long run, into higher literacy among future mothers and, through that mechanism, into better child survival outcomes. The estimate incorporates assumptions about the persistence of reading difficulties into adulthood.

For child marriage, WWHGE uses evidence on the relationship between staying in secondary education and a lower probability of marriage before the age of 18, based on Wodon et al. (2018, as cited in Kaffenberger et al., 2026)[7]. The model estimates the marriages potentially averted on the basis of girls' additional opportunities for secondary schooling.

Under these assumptions, WWHGE estimates that achieving universal foundational learning could avert 149,640 deaths of children under five and 367,375 child marriages in Latin America and the Caribbean between 2031 and 2050 (Kaffenberger et al., 2026). The authors note that the estimate of child marriages averted may understate the potential benefits, since it considers only the mechanism associated with staying in secondary education and does not incorporate other possible channels linked to learning.

BOX 3

Potential social benefits, 2031–2050

Cumulative modelled results for Latin America and the Caribbean if 9 in 10 children learned to read by age 10.

149,640

deaths of children under five **averted.**

Cumulative between 2031 and 2050. Estimate based on the relationship between maternal literacy and child survival.

367,375

child marriages **averted.**

Cumulative between 2031 and 2050. Estimate based on girls staying in secondary education.

Note: modelled results for Latin America and the Caribbean under the universal foundational learning scenario (90% of children reading with minimum proficiency by age 10); these are not observed effects.

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A3.

[7] WWHGE assumes that the additional girls who reach secondary school gain, on average, two additional years of secondary schooling, and applies a relative reduction in the risk of child marriage derived from the evidence used by the authors. See Kaffenberger et al. (2026), Annex B.5.2.

The results show that the magnitude and distribution of the potential benefits vary considerably depending on the dimension analysed. For example, Haiti would account for 25.4% of the child deaths averted in the region, while Brazil, Guatemala and Nicaragua together would account for 57.4% of the child marriages potentially averted. The latter results are particularly relevant in countries where child marriage and early unions are a documented problem[8], especially among girls, including adolescent girls, with fewer educational opportunities.

These results broaden the perspective on the potential benefits of foundational learning. Reducing child mortality and child marriage represents an improvement in social well-being in its own right, regardless of its economic consequences. From a human development perspective, these dimensions make it possible to recognise opportunities and capabilities that are not reflected in output or growth indicators.

[8] On the prevalence of child marriage and early unions, see UNICEF (n.d.). *Child marriage*. UNICEF Data. https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/child-marriage/

5. One region, many realities: the potential impact of learning on time

The aggregate results for Latin America and the Caribbean make it possible to gauge the regional potential of achieving universal foundational learning, but on their own they do not reveal the differences between countries.

The 21 countries included in the WWHGE study start from different learning levels, economic structures and educational, demographic and social conditions. Reaching the same scenario – 90% of children able to read with minimum proficiency by age 10 – therefore entails improvements of different magnitudes and is associated with different results depending on the context.

This heterogeneity is evident from the starting point. The proportion of children who reach minimum reading proficiency ranges from 15.3% in Guyana – a value imputed by WWHGE – to 79.4% in Trinidad and Tobago[9]. Consequently, the distances to the 90% scenario differ widely across countries. Initial learning gaps, however, do not by themselves determine the magnitude of the modelled results.

In absolute economic terms, Brazil and Mexico together account for around 52% of the additional output estimated for Latin America and the Caribbean. Adding Argentina, the three countries represent approximately 63% of the regional total. These shares reflect, among other factors, the size of their economies and the growth trajectories assumed in the model.

The comparison changes when relative results are considered. Whereas Brazil and Mexico show modelled increases in GDP per capita of 29.3% and 29.9% in 2050, respectively, the figure reaches 96.9% in Guyana, 85.1% in Belize and 69.9% in Honduras. These percentages express differences relative to each country's business-as-usual scenario, not economic magnitudes that are directly comparable in absolute terms.

Differences also emerge across dimensions. Mexico accounts for a considerable share of the region's additional economic output, but its share of the educational results is much smaller. Guatemala shows a different profile: its weight in the educational benefits exceeds its weight in additional output. In the social domain, Haiti stands out as accounting for a particularly high proportion of the child deaths potentially averted. These contrasts show that the distribution of benefits depends on the dimension considered.

Consequently, the magnitude of additional economic output is not, on its own, a sufficient criterion for comparing the potential benefits of learning across countries. The educational, labour-market and social results broaden that picture, but they do not establish which countries would obtain the highest returns per unit of resources invested either. That would require considering the costs, effectiveness and feasibility of interventions in each context.

The following matrix summarises these differences by showing the position of the 21 countries on seven educational, labour-market, economic and social indicators. The comparison makes it possible to identify diverse profiles of potential benefits, without establishing an overall ranking of countries or equating the magnitude of the results with the performance of their education systems.

[9] National percentages are taken from Table A1 of WWHGE (2026). Distances to the 90% scenario and each country's share of regional totals are IEE calculations, documented in Annex C.

One region, many profiles of potential benefits

Regional rank of the 21 countries on seven modelled outcomes of the universal foundational learning scenario (1 = highest value of the indicator).

	EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT			ECONOMY AND PUBLIC FINANCES			SOCIAL WELL-BEING
Country	Reaching last grade of primary	Reaching any form of secondary	Persistent youth employment	Additional economic output	Additional tax revenue	Δ GDP per capita in 2050 (%)	Under-five deaths averted
Argentina	10	9	6	**3**	**3**	13	10
Belize	18	19	20	20	20	**2**	19
Brazil	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	16	**2**
Chile	20	15	15	10	8	20	18
Colombia	4	6	4	4	4	14	7
Costa Rica	19	16	17	17	16	19	17
Dominican Republic	11	8	9	6	7	6	4
Ecuador	6	13	7	8	9	10	9
El Salvador	15	14	13	18	14	9	14
Guatemala	**3**	**2**	**3**	5	6	4	5
Guyana*	17	20	19	16	18	**1**	16
Haiti*	8	7	12	13	17	11	**1**
Honduras	9	5	8	12	10	**3**	6
Jamaica*	12	18	16	19	19	12	15
Mexico	5	**3**	**2**	**2**	**2**	15	**3**
Nicaragua	**2**	4	10	15	13	8	12
Panama	7	11	14	9	11	5	13
Paraguay	14	10	11	11	12	7	11
Peru	13	12	5	7	5	17	8
Trinidad and Tobago	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
Uruguay	16	17	18	14	15	18	20

Regional rank: **1–3** 4–7 8–14 15–21 *Top three ranks: darkest shading and bold.*

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1; IEE calculations based on the data in Annex B.

Note: regional rank of the 21 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean according to the magnitude of the estimated benefit for each indicator (1 = highest value). This is neither an overall ranking nor a measure of performance: rank 1 corresponds to the highest modelled value, not necessarily to better performance or greater policy efficiency, and no averages of ranks or composite indices are calculated. Six indicators are ordered by cumulative absolute magnitudes for 2031–2050; GDP per capita is ordered by its percentage change in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario. Results of the scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10. *Baseline reading proficiency value imputed by WWHGE.

The comparison confirms that countries do not occupy the same positions across all dimensions. While Brazil and Mexico account for a large share of the absolute economic results, countries such as Guatemala and Nicaragua gain prominence in certain educational trajectories. Guyana, for its part, shows the largest relative increase in GDP per capita, while Haiti accounts for the largest number of child deaths potentially averted. These differences reinforce the need to interpret the benefits of learning from a multidimensional perspective.

Detailed results for the 21 countries are presented in the country profiles in Annex A and in the comparative table in Annex B.

6. From evidence to policy: early literacy as a development priority

The results analysed broaden the perspective from which early literacy policies can be considered. Ensuring that children acquire foundational learning in the early years of schooling is a priority educational objective, but its potential implications extend beyond the education system and reach various dimensions of economic and social development.

This evidence provides an additional argument for public policy: early literacy should be strengthened not only for its immediate effects on learning, but also for the opportunities it can help to expand throughout life.

Improving learning requires effective interventions

International research shows that there are interventions capable of improving foundational learning. Angrist et al. (2023) review evidence on educational interventions in low- and lower-middle-income countries and identify strategies that have shown positive results relative to their costs[10].

These include structured pedagogy, which combines materials, pedagogical guidance and teacher support; Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL), which adapts instruction to the knowledge students have actually acquired; and computer-assisted learning, which adjusts activities to students' learning levels. Since this evidence comes mainly from low- and lower-middle-income countries, its application in Latin America and the Caribbean requires taking into account the characteristics of each education system.

These strategies offer concrete examples of how evidence can guide education policy decisions to improve foundational learning. Their relevance lies both in the results they have shown and in the principles they help to identify for designing interventions tailored to the needs and capacities of each education system.

Sustaining improvements requires policies and institutional capacity

Improving foundational learning does not depend solely on identifying effective pedagogical interventions. It also requires creating the institutional conditions to implement, support and sustain them over time.

The experience of the state of Ceará, in Brazil, offers a relevant example for Latin America and the Caribbean. The Literacy at the Right Age Programme (Programa Alfabetização na Idade Certa, PAIC) combined technical support to municipalities, teacher training, teaching materials, regular assessments and incentive mechanisms linked to educational results. Loureiro et al. (2020) analyse this experience and highlight its relevance for reducing learning poverty.

The case illustrates the importance of aligning teaching strategies with management capacity, coordination across levels of government and mechanisms for monitoring results.

Placing early literacy within a broader development agenda

The WWHGE estimates show that improving foundational learning could be associated with benefits that go beyond school trajectories: greater employment opportunities, economic growth, tax revenue and better outcomes in certain dimensions of social well-being.

[10] The evidence reviewed by Angrist et al. (2023) does not imply that all interventions are equally effective for every population or context. Their adoption requires considering implementation quality, available resources and the institutional conditions of each education system.

This reinforces the need to recognise early literacy as a strategic development priority. Strengthening it requires clear responsibilities within education systems, but it can also mobilise other actors in the public sector, civil society, academia and the private sector who share an interest in expanding the opportunities of new generations.

Drawing on the evidence reviewed and on the results of the scenario analysed, three policy directions are proposed to strengthen early literacy policies in Latin America and the Caribbean.

1. **Prioritise foundational learning from the early years of schooling.** Initial levels of reading proficiency show that a substantial proportion of children do not reach the minimum expected learning. This reinforces the need to set clear literacy goals, implement evidence-based teaching strategies and establish early assessment mechanisms that make it possible to identify difficulties and target timely support.
2. **Build sustained policies adapted to each context.** Differences across countries show that reaching a common goal requires responding to heterogeneous starting points and institutional capacities. Strategies should take these conditions into account, strengthen implementation capacity and ensure continuity. Since the potential benefits accrue over time, it is particularly important to sustain learning improvements beyond isolated interventions.
3. **Position early literacy as a cross-sectoral priority.** The estimates show that the potential benefits of improving learning go beyond school trajectories and extend to employment, economic activity, public finances and certain dimensions of social well-being. This provides grounds for broadening the recognition of literacy as a development priority and for strengthening coordination among public, academic, social and private actors, without diluting the central responsibility of education systems for ensuring learning.

These policy directions arise from bringing together two complementary bodies of evidence: research on interventions capable of improving learning, and estimates of their potential long-term benefits. The WWHGE model does not identify the policies required to reach the 90% scenario, nor does it estimate their costs. The proposed directions should therefore not be interpreted as direct results of an impact evaluation or a cost-benefit analysis of specific interventions.

7. Conclusions

Learning to read in the early years of schooling is a fundamental condition for sustaining educational trajectories and expanding opportunities throughout life. When this learning is not acquired on time, its consequences can extend beyond school and limit the development opportunities of new generations.

The WWHGE estimates make it possible to gauge the potential benefits of reaching a scenario in which 90% of children can read with minimum proficiency by age 10. The results show that a broad-based and sustained improvement in foundational learning could be associated with greater educational and labour-market opportunities, higher economic activity and tax revenue, and improvements in certain dimensions of social well-being.

The analysis of the 21 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean further shows that these potential benefits are not evenly distributed. Differences in initial learning levels and in economic, demographic and social conditions are reflected in results of different magnitude and composition. The potential value of improving learning therefore cannot be interpreted solely in terms of additional economic growth: it also requires considering the educational, labour-market and social opportunities that could be expanded in each context.

These results must be interpreted within the limits of the simulation exercise. They are neither forecasts nor estimates of the causal effect of a specific early literacy policy. Nor do they identify the interventions needed to reach the scenario analysed or the associated costs. Their contribution is to offer an approximation of the magnitude and distribution of the potential benefits of a sustained improvement in foundational learning.

From a public policy perspective, the evidence reinforces the need to ensure that all children acquire foundational learning from the early years of schooling, through effective and sustained interventions adapted to the conditions of each education system. At the same time, the potential benefits identified provide grounds for recognising early literacy as a priority that transcends the education sector and forms part of a broader development agenda.

Ensuring that children learn to read on time not only broadens their educational opportunities. It can also help to broaden the development opportunities of society as a whole.

Methodological note

The impact estimates presented in this study come from the simulation exercise conducted by the What Works Hub for Global Education (Kaffenberger et al., 2026). The exercise covers 114 countries in which fewer than 90% of 10-year-olds read with minimum proficiency; 21 of them are in Latin America and the Caribbean. Bolivia and Venezuela are not among the 114 countries in the exercise, and Cuba was excluded owing to incomplete macroeconomic data. The Instituto de Evidencia Educativa did not produce new estimates. Its contribution is a regional analysis of those results (distances to the 90% scenario, shares of regional totals and relative positions across countries), the procedure for which is set out in Annex C.

The model compares two scenarios for each country. In the business-as-usual scenario, learning levels remain at the baseline values used by WWHGE, which draw on information available for different years. In the universal foundational learning scenario, 90% of 10-year-olds are assumed to reach minimum reading proficiency immediately and to sustain it over time. The estimated results correspond to the differences between the two scenarios over 2031–2050.

Step 1. Starting point

The proportion of children who reach minimum reading proficiency is obtained as the complement of the learning poverty indicator (World Bank and UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022): *proportion reading = 1 – learning poverty*.

Step 2. Conversion to Harmonized Learning Outcomes (HLO)

Several of the effects documented in the literature are expressed in test scores. The model therefore translates the improvement in reading proficiency into changes in *Harmonized Learning Outcomes* (HLO), a scale that is comparable across countries (Angrist et al., 2021). The conversion uses a probit transformation, with an estimated coefficient of approximately –0.011. Because the relationship is non-linear, countries closer to 90% require proportionally larger increases in HLO to close the last points of the gap. The same relationship makes it possible to impute learning poverty for countries that have HLO data but no value for the indicator. In total, 24 countries have imputed values; in Latin America and the Caribbean, these are Guyana, Haiti and Jamaica.

Step 3. Parameters applied to each outcome

Based on each country's improvement in HLO, the model applies parameters drawn from the literature reviewed by WWHGE:

- **Economic output.** A 1% increase in HLO is associated with a 7.2% increase in GDP per capita growth (Angrist et al., 2021). The effect is phased in gradually, following the phases described in Section 3, with a cap of 7% on real annual GDP per capita growth.
- **Tax revenue.** Each country's tax-to-GDP ratio, held constant over time, is applied to the difference in GDP between the two scenarios. For countries without national data, WWHGE applies a ratio of 12%, corresponding to the World Bank average for lower-middle-income countries.
- **Reaching the last grade of primary school.** A 40% reduction in the probability of dropping out is assumed for each standard deviation of improvement in HLO.
- **Reaching any form of secondary school.** A 25% reduction in the probability of dropping out at the transition from primary to secondary school is assumed for each standard deviation of improvement. The indicator is estimated only among those who reach the last grade of primary school and is not equivalent to completing secondary education.

- **Youth employment.** A reduction of 4.4 percentage points in the youth unemployment rate is assumed for each standard deviation of improvement, applied to the youth labour force aged 15–24 from 2031 onwards. Annual reductions in the number of unemployed young people are summed over the period and reported, as in WWHGE, as additional young people in persistent employment.
- **Child mortality.** Maternal literacy is associated with a 30% reduction in under-five mortality (Kaffenberger and Pritchett, 2021). The effect is applied only to births to mothers who belong to the treated cohorts. In addition, the model adjusts for children who would learn to read later even without the scenario (catch-up).
- **Child marriage.** Wodon et al. (2018, as cited in Kaffenberger et al., 2026) estimate that each additional year of secondary education reduces the probability of marriage before the age of 18 by 6.1 percentage points. WWHGE converts this value into a relative reduction of 12.2% per year, based on an average prevalence of around 50% in the 15 countries with the highest child marriage rates. The model assumes that girls gain, on average, two years of secondary schooling and that half of the additional secondary entrants are girls.

Step 4. Aggregation and units

Economic and fiscal amounts are the sum of the annual differences between the two scenarios over 2031–2050, in constant 2023 US dollars and without applying a discount rate. The percentage difference in GDP per capita refers to 2050. Educational, labour-market and social results are additional quantities or events averted, cumulated over the period. Regional totals are taken from Table A3 of WWHGE.

Scope and limitations

- It is a simulation, not a forecast. It assumes an immediate and sustained jump to 90%, something no education system achieves from one year to the next.
- It does not estimate costs or returns. It neither calculates the costs nor identifies the interventions needed to reach 90%. Its results are therefore not equivalent to the return on a specific investment and cannot be attributed to any early literacy programme.
- Most of the parameters are correlational. The exceptions are those for child mortality and child marriage, which come from instrumental-variable approaches. Moreover, the relationship between learning and growth in Angrist et al. (2021) was not designed for such large learning gains, so the effect could be smaller.
- The baselines refer to different measurement years, in several cases before or around the pandemic, and some countries have imputed values.

For these reasons, the figures should be interpreted as orders of magnitude of the potential benefits, not as the expected results of a given policy.

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Annex A. Country profiles: results of the universal foundational learning scenario

The differences described in Section 5 become clearer when each country is examined separately. The profiles that follow present, for the 21 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean included in the WWHGE study, the starting point in reading proficiency, the distance to the 90% scenario and a selection of the main modelled results for 2031–2050, organised into four dimensions.

Each profile opens with a headline highlighting the country's most distinctive feature within the region. The figures come from WWHGE (2026); distances, shares and relative positions are calculations by the Instituto de Evidencia Educativa, the procedure for which is set out in Annex C. The results for the 21 countries are presented comparatively in Annex B. As in the rest of the study, these are results of a hypothetical scenario, neither observed effects nor effects attributable to a specific intervention.

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

ARGENTINA

Third in the region in additional output and tax revenue; its relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050 (+40.8%) would exceed those of Brazil and Mexico.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 10 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 3.63 trillion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+40.8%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 362.3 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

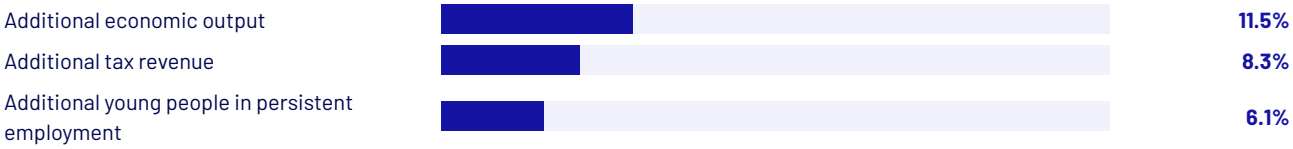
341,069
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

421,138
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

268,182
additional young people in persistent employment

3,930
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 3.4% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 2.6% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

BELIZE

Second-smallest additional output in the region, but the second-largest relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050 (+85.1%), after Guyana.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 14 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 40.6 billion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+85.1%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 8.7 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

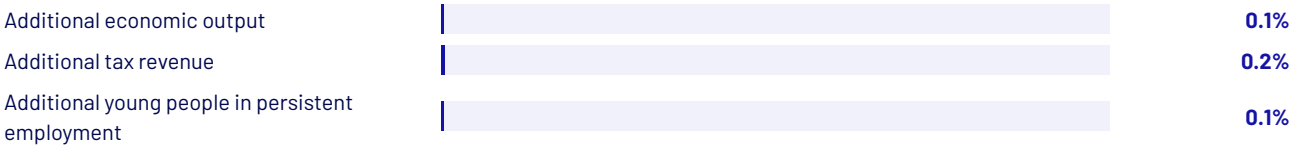
16,325
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

21,253
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

5,243
additional young people in persistent employment

154
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 0.2% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 0.1% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

BRAZIL

Largest share of the regional results: it would account for 26.4% of additional output and 30.2% of the additional young people in persistent employment in LAC.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 6 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 8.34 trillion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+29.3%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 1.17 trillion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

3,337,191
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

2,613,142
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

1,321,531
additional young people in persistent employment

23,400
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 33.0% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 15.6% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

CHILE

Second-highest baseline reading level in the region (72.8%) and second-smallest estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050 (+16.7%).

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



■ 10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency ■ Distance to the target (percentage points) ■ Target: 90%

Regional rank: 2 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 820.0 billion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+16.7%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 145.3 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

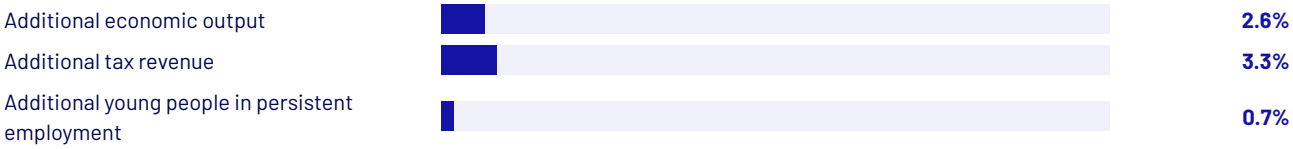
4,767
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

41,256
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

32,299
additional young people in persistent employment

213
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: less than 0.1% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 0.1% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

COLOMBIA

Fewer than half of children reach minimum reading proficiency; it would rank fourth in the region in output, tax revenue and young people in persistent employment.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 8 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 1.99 trillion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+33.2%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 349.7 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

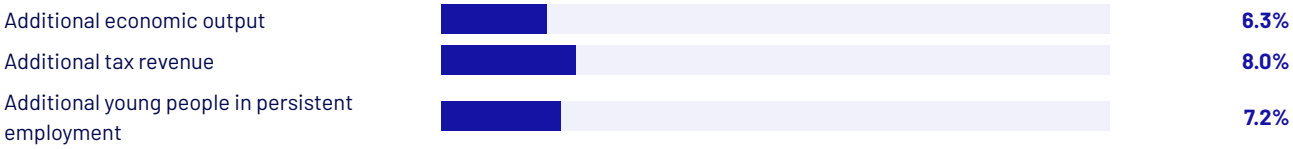
606,706
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

706,568
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

313,529
additional young people in persistent employment

6,513
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 6.0% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 4.4% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

COSTA RICA

Third-highest baseline reading level in the region (66.0%) and third-smallest estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050 (+19.1%).

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 3 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 252.6 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+19.1%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 35.1 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

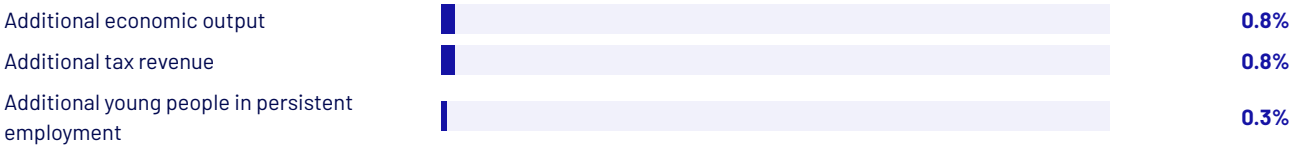
11,073
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

39,874
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

15,059
additional young people in persistent employment

362
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 0.1% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 0.2% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Sixth in the region in additional output, ahead of Peru, and sixth in the estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050 (+67.6%).

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 15 of 21 in LAC, tied with Paraguay (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 1.22 trillion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+67.6%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 175.7 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

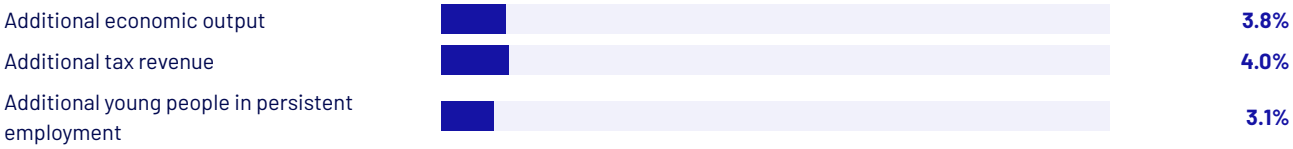
156,196
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

433,362
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

137,191
additional young people in persistent employment

16,354
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 1.5% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 10.9% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

ECUADOR

Sixth in the region in additional children reaching the last grade of primary school, with a larger share of that outcome (5.0%) than of additional output (3.0%).

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 11 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 942.4 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+48.7%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 123.4 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

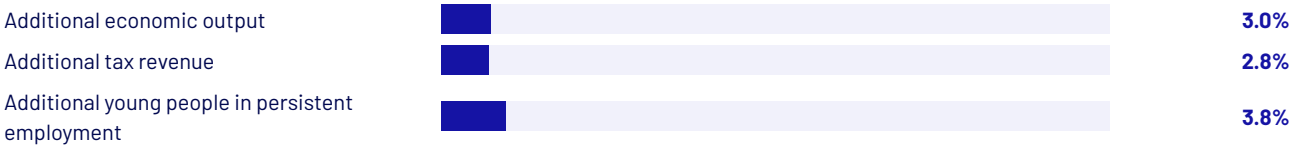
503,768
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

162,906
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

168,191
additional young people in persistent employment

3,946
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 5.0% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 2.6% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

EL SALVADOR

Fewer than one in three children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10; under the scenario analysed, GDP per capita in 2050 would be 53.0% higher.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 12 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 249.5 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+53.0%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 51.7 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

66,293

additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

145,840

additional children would reach any form of secondary school

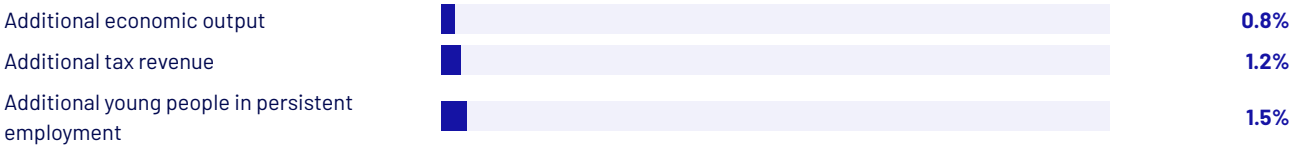
66,878

additional young people in persistent employment

836

deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 0.7% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 0.6% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

GUATEMALA

Second in the region in additional children reaching any form of secondary school, ahead of Mexico, and third in young people in persistent employment.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 17 of 21 in LAC, tied with Panama (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 1.55 trillion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+69.2%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 178.8 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

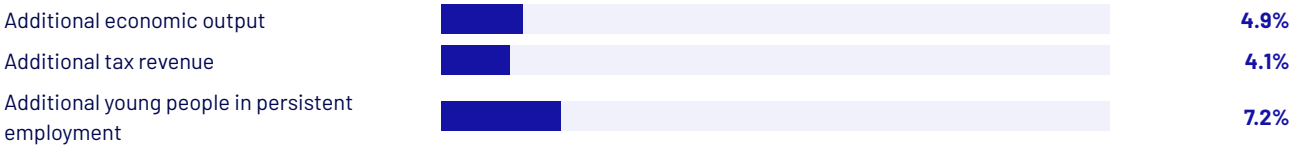
1,302,905
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

2,062,327
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

313,962
additional young people in persistent employment

12,798
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 12.9% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 8.6% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

GUYANA

The lowest starting point in the region (15.3%, imputed value) and the largest estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050 (+96.9%).

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 21 of 21 in LAC; value imputed by WWHGE (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 258.5 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+96.9%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 31.0 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

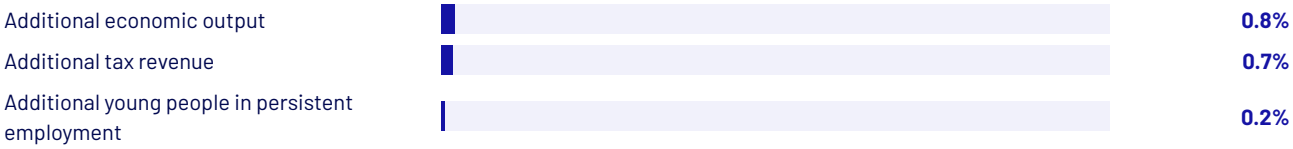
22,076
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

20,349
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

8,237
additional young people in persistent employment

700
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 0.2% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 0.5% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

HAITI

It would account for 25.4% of the child deaths averted in the region, compared with 0.9% of additional output: its weight is far greater in child health.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 13 of 21 in LAC; value imputed by WWHGE (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 285.8 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+47.7%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 34.3 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

453,819

additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

472,584

additional children would reach any form of secondary school

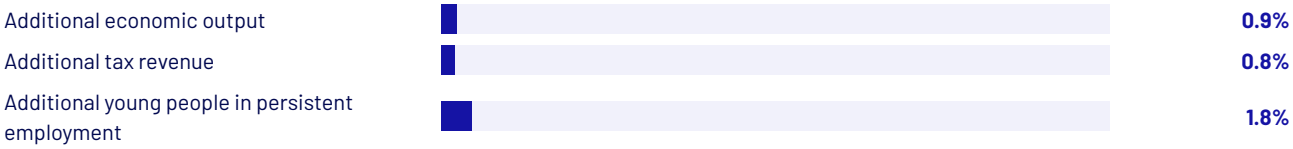
79,724

additional young people in persistent employment

37,970

deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 4.5% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 25.4% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

HONDURAS

Second-lowest baseline reading level in the region (20.7%), after Guyana, and the third-largest estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 20 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 519.9 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+69.9%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 78.3 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

374,512

additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

803,405

additional children would reach any form of secondary school

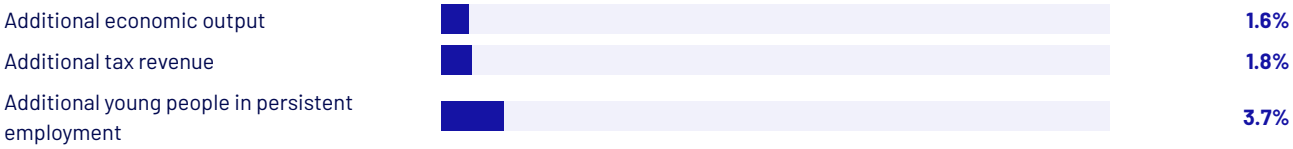
163,992

additional young people in persistent employment

7,575

deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 3.7% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 5.1% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

JAMAICA

Reading level close to the regional figure (45.5% compared with 46.7%); far more additional children would reach the last grade of primary school than secondary school.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 9 of 21 in LAC; value imputed by WWHGE (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 109.9 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+46.5%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 28.2 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

134,966

additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

21,508

additional children would reach any form of secondary school

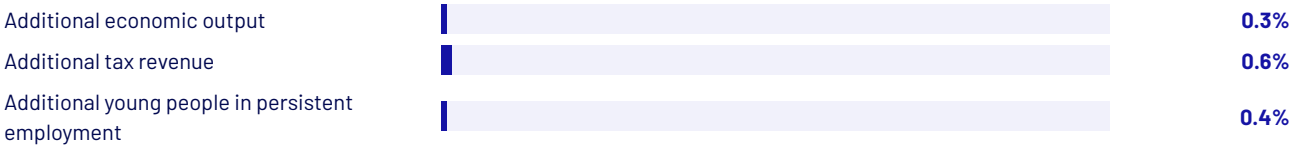
15,663

additional young people in persistent employment

752

deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 1.3% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 0.5% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

MEXICO

Second in the region in output, tax revenue and young people in persistent employment, although its share of the primary-school results would be much smaller (5.4%).

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 7 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 8.09 trillion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+29.9%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 1.15 trillion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

547,579
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

1,672,700
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

938,960
additional young people in persistent employment

20,222
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 5.4% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 13.5% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

NICARAGUA

Second in the region in additional children reaching the last grade of primary school, behind only Brazil, with less than 1% of additional output.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 19 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 266.4 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+65.6%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 53.1 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

1,549,572

additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

1,239,257

additional children would reach any form of secondary school

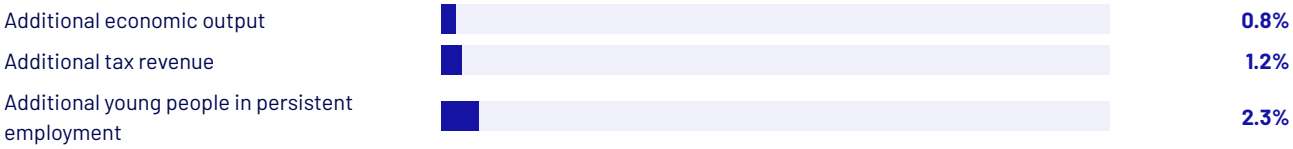
99,402

additional young people in persistent employment

3,282

deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 15.3% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 2.2% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

PANAMA

One of the lowest baseline reading levels in the region (21.5%, the same as Guatemala) and the fifth-largest estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 17 of 21 in LAC, tied with Guatemala (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 937.1 billion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+69.0%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 69.9 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

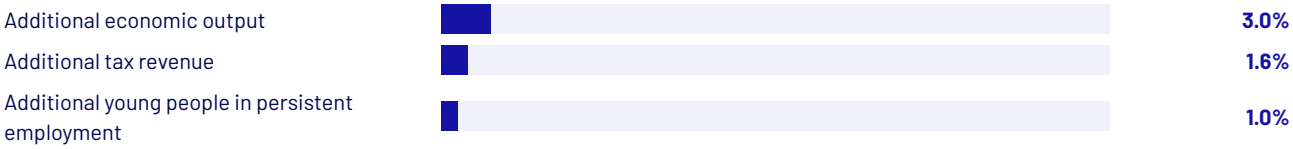
466,251
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

254,552
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

43,624
additional young people in persistent employment

1,273
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 4.6% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 0.9% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

PARAGUAY

Seventh-largest estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in the region, and almost three times as many additional children reaching secondary school as reaching the last grade of primary.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 15 of 21 in LAC, tied with Dominican Republic (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 628.6 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+66.4%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 63.7 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

95,070

additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

263,961

additional children would reach any form of secondary school

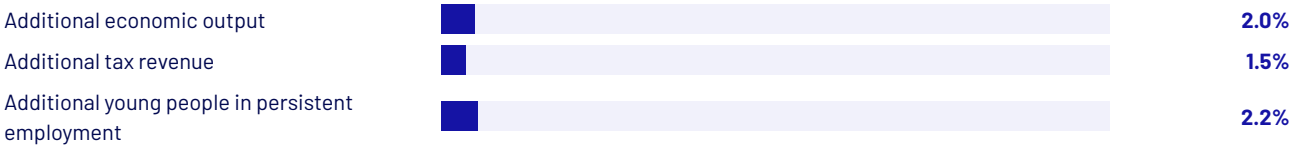
95,354

additional young people in persistent employment

3,914

deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 0.9% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 2.6% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

PERU

Fifth-highest baseline reading level in the region (55.6%) and fifth in LAC in additional tax revenue and young people in persistent employment.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 5 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 1.19 trillion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+27.2%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 189.0 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

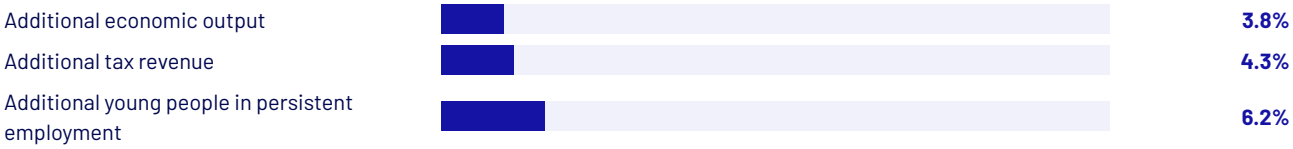
100,826
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

179,559
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

271,419
additional young people in persistent employment

5,332
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 1.0% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · 3.6% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Highest baseline reading level (79.4%) and smallest distance to the target in the region; also the smallest additional output and the smallest relative increase in GDP per capita.

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 1 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 35.6 billion
in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+10.6%
in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 5.9 billion
in additional tax revenue
cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

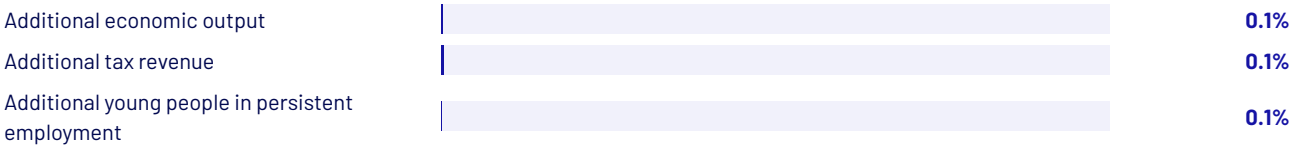
2,344
additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

8,660
additional children would reach any form of secondary school

2,206
additional young people in persistent employment

53
deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: less than 0.1% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · less than 0.1% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

ANNEX A · COUNTRY PROFILE

URUGUAY

Fourth-highest baseline reading level in the region (56.4%) and fourth-smallest estimated relative increase in GDP per capita in 2050 (+26.5%).

STARTING POINT · READING PROFICIENCY



10-year-olds reaching minimum reading proficiency · Distance to the target (percentage points) · Target: 90%

Regional rank: 4 of 21 in LAC (1 = highest baseline reading level)

POTENTIAL ECONOMIC IMPACT · 2031–2050

CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

USD 273.9 billion

in additional economic output

RELATIVE CHANGE IN 2050

+26.5%

in GDP per capita in 2050 relative to the business-as-usual scenario

USD 51.1 billion

in additional tax revenue

cumulative 2031–2050

EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT AND HEALTH BENEFITS · CUMULATIVE 2031–2050

29,617

additional children would reach the last grade of primary school

26,471

additional children would reach any form of secondary school

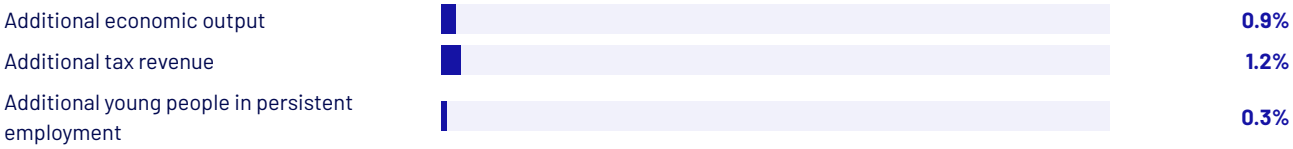
14,727

additional young people in persistent employment

60

deaths of children under five averted

COUNTRY WEIGHT IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN · SHARE OF THE REGIONAL TOTAL



Common scale across the 21 profiles: 0%–40% of the regional total.

Other shares: 0.3% of the additional children reaching the last grade of primary school · less than 0.1% of the child deaths averted

Note: estimates for the hypothetical scenario in which 90% of children reach minimum reading proficiency by age 10, compared with the business-as-usual scenario; these are neither observed results nor forecasts. Results are cumulative for 2031–2050, except for the increase in GDP per capita, which refers to 2050. Monetary values in constant 2023 US dollars (1 trillion = 10^{12}; 1 billion = 10^{9}). The four education, employment and health benefits are independent estimates and do not describe the trajectory of a single cohort. Distance to the target, regional rank and shares: IEE calculations (see Annex C).

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total).

Annex B. Results by country, 2031–2050

Country	% reading at age 10	Distance to 90% (p.p.)[1]	Additional children reaching the last grade of primary	Additional children reaching any form of secondary school	Additional young people in persistent employment	Additional output (USD billion)	Δ GDP per capita in 2050	Additional tax revenue (USD billion)	Under-five deaths averted	Child marriages averted
Argentina	40.9%	49.1	341,069	421,138	268,182	3,629.9	40.8%	362.3	3,930	7,964
Belize	23.6%	66.4	16,325	21,253	5,243	40.6	85.1%	8.7	154	869
Brazil	53.1%	36.9	3,337,191	2,613,142	1,321,531	8,341.7	29.3%	1,171.3	23,400	83,526
Chile	72.8%	17.2	4,767	41,256	32,299	820.0	16.7%	145.3	213	1,237
Colombia	48.6%	41.4	606,706	706,568	313,529	1,990.5	33.2%	349.7	6,513	20,171
Costa Rica	66.0%	24.0	11,073	39,874	15,059	252.6	19.1%	35.1	362	832
Dominican Republic	22.3%	67.7	156,196	433,362	137,191	1,215.6	67.6%	175.7	16,354	16,654
Ecuador	34.1%	55.9	503,768	162,906	168,191	942.4	48.7%	123.4	3,946	4,412
El Salvador	30.9%	59.1	66,293	145,840	66,878	249.5	53.0%	51.7	836	3,505
Guatemala	21.5%	68.5	1,302,905	2,062,327	313,962	1,545.8	69.2%	178.8	12,798	74,223
Guyana[2]	15.3%	74.7	22,076	20,349	8,237	258.5	96.9%	31.0	700	802
Haiti[2]	25.2%	64.8	453,819	472,584	79,724	285.8	47.7%	34.3	37,970	8,591
Honduras	20.7%	69.3	374,512	803,405	163,992	519.9	69.9%	78.3	7,575	33,325
Jamaica[2]	45.5%	44.5	134,966	21,508	15,663	109.9	46.5%	28.2	752	706
Mexico	52.4%	37.6	547,579	1,672,700	938,960	8,092.2	29.9%	1,151.5	20,222	37,141
Nicaragua	21.1%	68.9	1,549,572	1,239,257	99,402	266.4	65.6%	53.1	3,282	53,219
Panama	21.5%	68.5	466,251	254,552	43,624	937.1	69.0%	69.9	1,273	8,199
Paraguay	22.3%	67.7	95,070	263,961	95,354	628.6	66.4%	63.7	3,914	6,956
Peru	55.6%	34.4	100,826	179,559	271,419	1,187.0	27.2%	189.0	5,332	4,206
Trinidad and Tobago	79.4%	10.6	2,344	8,660	2,206	35.6	10.6%	5.9	53	44
Uruguay	56.4%	33.6	29,617	26,471	14,727	273.9	26.5%	51.1	60	794
Latin America and the Caribbean	**46.7%**	**43.3**	**10,122,926**	**11,610,672**	**4,375,374**	**31,624**	**46.0%**[3]	**4,358**	**149,640**	**367,375**

Source: WWHGE (2026), Table A1 (countries) and Table A3 (regional total). Cumulative values for 2031–2050, amounts in constant 2023 US dollars, except for the percentage reading (baseline) and Δ GDP per capita (2050).

[1] Calculated as 90% minus the initial percentage of children reaching minimum reading proficiency.

[2] Learning poverty value imputed by WWHGE.

[3] Value published by WWHGE (2026), Table A3. The global figure (+27%) is population-weighted, but WWHGE does not document the aggregation method used for the regional values. It should not be interpreted as a simple average of the national changes.

Annex C. Supplementary indicators and calculation criteria

To facilitate comparison across countries and dimensions, supplementary indicators were calculated from the results published by WWHGE (2026). These include distances to the 90% scenario, shares of regional totals and relative positions across countries. The calculations do not modify the original estimates; they make it possible to present and interpret the results from a regional perspective.

Indicator	Formula or procedure	Result
Regional distance to 90%	90 – 46.7 (Table A3)	43.3 p.p.
Distance to 90% by country	90 – % reading (Table A1)	Between 10.6 p.p. (Trinidad and Tobago) and 74.7 p.p. (Guyana)
LAC share of global additional output	31,624 ÷ USD 196,200 billion (Table A3 and Table 3 of WWHGE, 2026)	16.1%
LAC share of global additional tax revenue	4,358 ÷ USD 21,400 billion (Table A3 and Table 3 of WWHGE, 2026)	20.4%
Concentration in Brazil and Mexico	(8,341.7 + 8,092.2) ÷ 31,623.5 (sum of the 21 countries, Table A1)	52.0%
Concentration in Brazil, Mexico and Argentina	(8,341.7 + 8,092.2 + 3,629.9) ÷ 31,623.5 (sum of the 21 countries, Table A1)	63.4%
LAC share of global child deaths averted	149,640 ÷ 11.9 million (Table A3 and Table 3 of WWHGE, 2026)	1.3%
LAC share of global child marriages averted	367,375 ÷ 16.1 million (Table A3 and Table 3 of WWHGE, 2026)	2.3%
Haiti's share of child deaths averted in LAC	37,970 ÷ 149,639 (sum of the 21 countries, Table A1)	25.4%
Guatemala's share of child marriages averted in LAC	74,223 ÷ 367,376 (sum of the 21 countries, Table A1)	20.2%
Concentration of child marriages averted in Brazil, Guatemala and Nicaragua	(83,526 + 74,223 + 53,219) ÷ 367,376	57.4%
Each country's weight in the region	Country value ÷ sum of the 21 countries (Table A1)	Section 5 and Annex A
Regional rank	Order of the 21 countries by % reading. Countries with the same percentage share the same rank.	Annex A

Note: the regional totals published by WWHGE correspond to the Latin America and the Caribbean row of Table A3. To calculate national shares of the regional results, the IEE uses the sum of the values of the 21 countries included in Table A1. The two sources differ slightly owing to rounding in the published figures.